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(SPB:MCD)

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant : David Y. Zhang

Application No.: 09/978,261

Art Unit No. : 1645

Filed : October 15, 2001

Examiner : Not Yet
Assigned

For : NUCLEIC ACID AMPLIFICATION METHODS

Date: October 22, 2002

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, DC 20231

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT AND INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Sir:

Please amend the subject application as follows:

In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1 through 39 without prejudice to applicants' right to pursue the subject matter of these claims in a future continuation or divisional application.

Please add new claims 40 through 52 as follows:

40.(new) A method for detecting a target nucleic acid in a sample comprising:

(a) contacting the nucleic acid with a circular oligonucleotide probe under conditions that allow hybridization between complementary sequences in the target nucleic acid and the circular oligonucleotide probe;

(b) adding an oligonucleotide primer pair comprising a first primer and a second primer; wherein